

SECRET

580

20 December 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Air Support Problems for BGFIEND and QKSTAIR.

1. The following information was obtained in an interview with Mr. Ray Norden of Seaboard & Western, on the 19th of December 1950. Seaboard & Western is presently operating C-54E's and G's transatlantic, and utilizing C-46 type aircraft for feeder lines within Europe. Mr. Norden stated that procurement of a good C-54 at this time would be a difficult problem. However, by paying a premium price of about \$300,000, it might be possible.

2. With regard to purchase of aircraft of this type from the USAF, present policy is that the Air Force will not sell to commercial companies but will lease if aircraft available. Under such agreement, subleasing is not permitted. The Air Force also has established a priority list of airlines for such equipment. According to Norden, Seaboard & Western is very low on this list.

3. If Seaboard & Western were to purchase aircraft either from the Air Force or from commercial sources, they would require an export license from the Munitions Board in order to sell to our cover company in Europe. As a possible cover company, Mr. Norden suggested Luxembourg Airlines. Seaboard & Western owns 40% of this line with 15% owned by Scottish Airlines. Norden pointed out that there are a number of CAA inspectors throughout Europe, checking all clearances, flight reports and requiring conformance with safety regulations. This would apparently make covert operations extremely difficult if conducted from a base in Western Europe.

4. Regarding supply of spare parts and equipment, Seaboard & Western has a master export license and there would be no difficulty in importing parts by their agent in LCFLAKE.

5. Norden believes that a minimum of 50 hours transition training would be required in checking out a C-54 crew, even though they have previously flown four-engine aircraft.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

TWF/clis

SECRET